

The Isra and Mi'raj

(The Night Journey and Ascension)

Part 7



The Quran linguistic miracle series

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Then Allah (swt) says:

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ

Your companion is neither astray nor being misled

Two things are negated for the Prophet (saw), الضلالة (misguidance) and الغواية (being misled).

What is the difference between them?

الضلالة : refers to being led astray intentionally or unintentionally. For example, knowledge or biases (based on misinformation) one might have. This might cause one to go astray. On the other hand one could just be astray because he doesn't know better. This attribute can be used for both humans and animals e.g. we can say ضلّت الدابة (The riding animal got lost) but not غوت الدابة.

The Quran says in Surat Al Jathya ayah 33:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهُهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ

Have you then considered him who takes his low desire for his god, and Allah has made him err
having knowledge

In Surat Al Kahf ayah 104:

الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعِيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يُحْسِبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا

Those whose effort goeth astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they do good work.

The opposite of الضلالة is الهدى (guidance). In the Quran you will find these 2 words together

when Allah (swt) is mentioning guidance and misguidance. E.g. (يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

الغواية : is a deeper level of misguidance based on a reason and is a much deeper level of misguidance. It is only used for the morally responsible.

The opposite of الغواية is الرشد (uprightness). In the Quran you will find these 2 words together when Allah (swt) is mentioning uprightness and misguidance e.g. (قد تبين الرشد من الغي)

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ

Your companion is neither astray nor being misled

In this verse Allah (swt) used the word صَاحِبُكُمْ / your companion, and he was not called by his name Muhammad or RasulAllah ﷺ. In the Quran the word صاحبكم is used to negate:

1. Misguidance (as in this verse)
2. Being possessed/ insane

Can you find these instances in the Quran?

This word was the most appropriate to use to indicate that Prophet ﷺ was someone who you lived with for a lifetime and were witness to his truthfulness and honesty. In other words Allah (swt) is saying you that “you know he is not mad, misguided or possessed or any other false allegation you claim. “

If we look at the oath in the beginning of the Surah,

By the Star when it goes down

Misguidance also is a fall from the right path. It is interesting to note that whenever misguidance (الضلال) is mentioned in the Quran the preposition في (in) is used to indicate a falling into it i.e. one falls into misguidance. (في ضلال مبين)

Notice also that whenever guidance (الهداية) is mentioned the preposition على (upon) is used to indicate height and elevation.

مَا of negation, was repeated twice to negate each state separately and both together. If it wasn't repeated then only both of these states together would be negated and there will be a possibility (from the language) that one of these states can exist.

Negation of misguidance and being led astray were negated in the past tense so what about the future?

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ

nor does He say (aught) of (his own) desire

الْهَوَىٰ refers to desire or caprice i.e the inclination of the soul or mind to evil. It also means “to fall”. Whoever follows one’s هَوَىٰ will be led astray and will fall into misguidance

The imperfect (present) tense verb is used to negate the present. The imperfect tense is also used with the meaning of continuity i.e. for the future.

Allah (swt) didn't say ما نطق عن الهوى using the past tense verb because this would only negate him speaking with desire in the past.

So Allah (swt) negates misguidance and being led astray in the past tense and then negates the Prophet ﷺ speaking from his own desire in the present and future. In other words he is speaking on behalf of Allah (swt) which also negates misguidance.

Misguidance is negated for the past present and future.

نطق means he spoke sounds and letter which made his meaning clear. He uttered articulate and rational speech. النطق is used predominately for humans and can be used for animals in the metaphorical sense.

Usually with the verb نطق we use the preposition ب e.g. كتابنا ينطق بالحق / our book speaks with truth. In the verse the preposition عن was used.

If one was to speak the truth it is possible that what is **driving one** to say it is one's desires and whims. By using the word عن , this indicates that what is driving and motivating the Prophet

ﷺ to speak, is not desire or whim. Using the preposition عن gives 2 meanings

1. That he is not motivated or driven by desire
2. Nor does he speak from his own desire.

So in this verse Allah (swt) is explaining the pure nature of the Prophet ﷺ .

Notice that the Surah's subject matter is praising and elevating the Prophet ﷺ as well as defending him from all the false allegations that the disbelievers had accused him of.

Surat Al Toor was asking him to be patient about all the false allegations that the disbelievers had accused him of and Surat Al Najm is a response to all these false allegations.